



UNCLASSIFIED
EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Kabul, Afghanistan

June 6, 1979

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY *M. O. [signature]* DATE *3-13-81*

RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE *(R)*

TS AUTH. _____ REASON(S) _____

ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐

DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☒

RELEASE DENIED ☐

PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS _____

OFFICIAL-INFORMAL

Ronald D. Lorton, Esquire
Country Officer for Afghanistan
NEA/PAB
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Ron:

The enclosed New Republic article by Morton Kondracke, entitled Ugly American Redux, also contains the now-hoary allegation that officers of this Embassy were unable to handle the language situation at the Kabul Hotel on the morning of Ambassador Dubs' abduction. For the record, there were four Embassy employees in that initial party. Although Mike Malinowski was new here, and Chuck Boles had only a rudimentary command of Dari, I was FSI-trained in the language. The fourth man in our group, FSN Abdul Khaliq Ghafari, had native competence in Dari and Pushtu. The point is not relevant, however, because fluent English was spoken by the first hotel and security people with whom we came into contact.

Do you have any idea where this myth about a language problem originated? We were certainly not so handicapped at any time during the entire episode.

Speaking of language competence, Ron, you probably have noted that we recently suggested to the Department that at least one of the next FSOs assigned to this Embassy receive training in Pushtu, which has become the political lingua franca at Kabul since the Khalqi takeover. Many of the Khalqi leaders are backcountry Pushtuns from the eastern and southern provinces, like Paktia. They almost exclusively use their guttural language (which Dari speakers describe as "like pebbles rolling around inside a drum") for speeches and interviews -- which are subsequently translated into Dari

UNCLASSIFIED
N/A

UNCLASSIFIED

2.

by the Afghan media, often an entire day later. Although the majority of people in the Kabul region use Dari (perhaps 90%), up 70% of Kabul TV programming is in Pushtu. Even during the heyday of Daoud's Pushtunistan campaign back in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Dari was still the language most often used here (probably because Daoud himself spoke very poor Pushtu!). Although both are Eastern Iranian tongues, they are as far apart as English and German.

Please convey my greetings to everyone.

Cordially yours,



Bruce A. Flatin
Acting Deputy Chief
Of Mission

Enclosure: as stated

UNCLASSIFIED

The speech drew a sharp rebuke from the State Department, which quite precisely described it as "reprehensible, a gross misrepresentation of the facts, and demagoguery." The *Washington Post* did not exaggerate in calling the speech "disgusting." Even today Weicker recants not a word of what he refers to, with obvious satisfaction, as a "tough speech."

Toughness is a vital part of Weicker's self-image, and his unpredictable views are one way of demonstrating it. His favorite term of praise, usually applied to himself, is "hard-nosed." He naturally regards his aggressive image as a favorable contrast to President Carter's more restrained, thoughtful demeanor, which sometimes projects as weakness or indecisiveness. Weicker misses few chances to criticize Carter for his lack of "tough leadership." Like John Connally, he's banking on the traditional American myth of virility to carry him into the White House. But Weicker appears even more enraptured by the mystique of machismo than Connally is. He owns a trophy consisting of a large pylon with a pair of brass balls mounted on top, above the inscription: "You've got 'em, boy, you've got 'em."

Weicker's unpredictable votes owe more to his self-image than to either a particular ideological vision or an eagerness to pander to popular opinion. One has to give him credit for his willingness to adopt and defend iconoclastic positions; in fact Weicker sometimes almost appears to go out of his way to offend the voters. Last year he loudly denounced the anti-tax mood symbolized by Proposition 13. For years now he has evangelized for both gasoline rationing and decontrol of oil prices—a position that, besides being logically dubious, is guaranteed to anger almost everyone who holds an opinion on energy policy. One Democratic Senate aide who deals frequently with Weicker says, "There's no rhyme or reason to anything he comes up with. He takes a lot of positions he knows are unpopular, but he just thinks they're right." One may admire Weicker's boldness, but boldness for its own sake rarely yields intelligent policy.

Weicker knows that his unconventional views and his repudiation of the views of his party's right wing will not make him many friends among the party's rank-and-file. Republican audiences don't applaud politicians who praise, as Weicker did in his announcement, public housing, job training, federally subsidized health care and food stamps. Weicker's strategy, which isn't totally implausible, counts on two things: being the only liberal in a field crowded with conservatives, and being able to attract crossover votes from Democrats and independents in those states with open primaries. For the time being he's concentrating on the New England states—New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont, and of course Connecticut. New England naturally looks like his best bet for votes; and victories in those states, which have early primaries, would provide any campaign with a big boost. The strategy is fairly conventional, but also rather far-fetched.

Weicker and his aides have adjusted their perceptions of political reality to fit his ambition, instead of the other way around.

What kind of a president would Weicker make? His delight in unpredictability makes it hard to guess. On concrete issues Weicker is usually charmingly vague. Asked about the Carter administration's policy toward the Middle East, Weicker rails about the importance of "strong ties to Israel"; asked about the wisdom of a mutual defense treaty with Israel, he says, "I wouldn't want to generalize." Often Weicker's courage means he will come out for square and unequivocally for things like "integrity and idealism." All politicians talk this way much of the time, but one gets the feeling that Weicker doesn't really know when he's blowing smoke and when he's talking seriously. But more distressing is Weicker's equation of virility with sound leadership. A series of presidents preoccupied with proving the nation's manhood—in the Cuban missile crisis, the Vietnam War, the Mayaguez affair—may have cured the American people of their traditional idealization of "tough" presidents. What we should have learned—and what Lowell Weicker should hope we haven't—is that toughness and decisiveness are no substitute for intelligent policy, and that an insistence on looking tough and decisive no matter what often leads to disaster.

Stephen Chapman

What our diplomats don't know can hurt us.

Ugly American Redux

Americans . . . who cannot speak the language can have no more than an academic understanding of a country's customs, beliefs, religion and humor. Restricted to communications with only that special, small and usually well-to-do segment of the native population fluent in English, they receive a limited and often misleading picture of the nation around them.

—William Lederer and Eugene Burdick,
The Ugly American, 1958

After America's big surprise in Iran, horror stories tumbling out of the government suggest that US diplomats abroad are as ill-prepared and isolated as

Lederer and Burdick portrayed them 21 years ago. It turns out that only six of the 60 US foreign service officers in Iran during the revolutionary year 1978 were minimally proficient in Farsi, not including the ambassador. The political section contained no one who was fluent in the language for much of the year, until a Persia expert was reassigned in the fall from duties handling African affairs for the State Department's United Nations desk. The Voice of America hasn't broadcast in Farsi since 1959, even though only a tiny fraction of the Iranian population speaks English. The VOA is just now gearing up to re-inaugurate Farsi broadcasts. In neighboring Afghanistan, the first two US embassy employees to arrive at the scene after US Ambassador Adolph Dubois was kidnapped were unable to speak Dari, the Afghan dialect of Farsi. In Pakistan, another key country in the so-called "arc of crisis," only five of America's 32 diplomatic officials are required to be minimally proficient in Urdu. In Somalia, nobody in the US embassy is required to know the local language.

In Kenya, only one officer of 22 in the US mission is required to speak Swahili. The State Department's reasoning is that most of the country's elite speak English. However, most of the country's non-elites do not. In the Soviet Union, almost all of the principal US diplomatic positions are language-designated, but the language required is Russian. Only one out of the 58 top US representatives is required to speak Ukrainian, and none need speak Uzbek or any of the other Turkic tongues spoken by the Soviet Union's increasingly restive Moslem peoples. The State Department contends the Soviets don't allow US diplomats to travel around enough to use these languages, but even in Washington the US government has only two or three employees who are expert in the affairs of the Soviet Union's Central Asian peoples, who shortly will amount to a third of the Soviet population. When Deng Xiaoping visited the United States, and when African leaders visit China, the interpreter for "level exchanges" always is a Chinese. The US government is not a single fully bilingual interpreter of Chinese, or of Japanese either. A total of 12 foreign service officers are at the "4-4" level of fluency in Chinese—fully competent, but not native speakers—and 19 in Japanese.

Our Ugly American problems are not limited to lack of language proficiency. Jimmy Carter has a better record than many previous presidents for picking experienced diplomats to be ambassadors abroad. But he has chosen some Louis Searses, Joe Bings and George Swifts, as well. (They were the dolts we sent to fictional Sarkhan in *The Ugly American*). John West and Patrick Lucey were effective governors of South Carolina and Wisconsin, respectively, and early supporters of Jimmy Carter for president, but they had few qualifications to be ambassadors to countries as important as Saudi Arabia and Mexico. Neither speaks the language of his host country, though Lucey has been taking Spanish lessons. West, according to an

experienced US official, is "totally out of his league" in Saudi Arabia and is insensitive to its politics and culture. He reportedly has tried to make pals with Crown Prince Fahd, but has alienated other important princes in the process. Lucey seems to have alienated many of the professionals on his embassy staff and also seems to have communicated to Mexican officials an unhappiness at being posted to their country. Top US officials contend that the US government has a woefully inadequate understanding of how Mexico works, close and increasingly important a neighbor though it is.

The White House has ordered several reviews of the quality of US representation and reporting. Last week President Carter's national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, wrote Representative Paul Simon of Illinois, a critic of US foreign-language education, that he had asked the Pentagon, State Department, International Communications Agency and Central Intelligence Agency to launch "a landmark study into the state of foreign language and international studies in the US." Brzezinski has been urging that US agencies overseas become more sensitive to political, social, economic and cultural trends in foreign countries, and concentrate less on specific items of current intelligence. In the aftermath of the convulsion in Iran, an inter-agency task force has been ordered to locate other potential trouble spots where US diplomatic reporting may be inadequate, and to find ways to improve it. The State Department also is specifically reviewing its foreign language coverage.

Ugly Americanism is not just a governmental problem. Reportedly not a single Western journalist in Tehran to cover the Iranian revolution could speak Farsi. It's common for the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and other major organizations to give their correspondents some language training before foreign assignments, but the reporters usually are far from fluent and have to depend on hired local assistants. US publications also have been cutting back their foreign services. No US newspaper now has a full-time correspondent in Eastern Europe, where an eruption against Ugly Sovietism could occur at any time. US corporations don't perform any better than the government or newspapers. According to Senator (and semanticist) S. I. Hayakawa, there are 10,000 Japanese businessmen in the United States, all of whom speak English, but only 1000 US businessmen in Japan, of whom few can utter much Japanese at all.

The fundamental cause of these problems is a failure of the American education system. One might expect that traditional American isolationism was even a deeper cause, but according to statistics compiled by S. Frederick Starr, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution's Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, interest in foreign language study in the US peaked in 1915, when 36 percent of secondary school

pupils were studying modern foreign languages. There was a steady decline after that, through World War II and into the cold war, to 20 percent in the late 1950s. Sputnik and the National Defense Education Act boosted that figure only up to 24 percent in 1960, and it has been backsliding ever since, down to about 15 percent now. There are four million youngsters enrolled in foreign language courses in high schools nowadays, but 90 percent of them are in either the first or second year of language study. Only five percent of US high school students graduate with more than two years of language training. Even though elementary school years are the easiest time for children to learn languages, less than one percent of America's grade school kids are given such instruction.

In 1915, 85 percent of the nation's colleges had foreign language admissions requirements, but only eight percent now do, and the number keeps dropping. So do the number of colleges offering language instruction, the number of students enrolled and the number of students being trained to be language teachers. The same is true of international relations studies. It's sometimes claimed, as an excuse, that because English has become such a world language, there's no need for Americans to learn other tongues. But that is a stupid proposition. English is a world language because Britain once was a mighty empire and because the United States emerged from World War II as economically, militarily and politically the most powerful nation on earth. The US decided it didn't want to be militarily dominant. Economically, the dollar is drooping and other countries are considering alternate world currencies. If we are not politically strong, people will use other languages, too. The only way we can be politically strong is to speak other people's languages.

President Carter has appointed a commission to recommend ways to improve language instruction in US schools. Starr and others have called for a system of big city international high schools, for a rewriting of the Defense Education Act and for increased funding of the Fulbright scholarship program and other international education programs.

Pending any reversal of trends in the schools, responsibility for training US diplomats will rest with the State Department. Unhappily, inquiries there suggest that foreign service officers have little incentive to learn and stick with difficult languages or area specialties. Foreign language instruction in schools and colleges is in such a bad way that the department long ago had to drop language proficiency as a prerequisite for entry into the foreign service. But it does not even give applicants a competitive advantage if they do speak another language.

Once in the service, new officers get a one-time promotion if they know foreign languages. Minimal professional proficiency (referred to as a 3/3 rating—3 for reading, 3 for speaking) in a popular "world"

language, or limited working knowledge (2/2) of a "difficult" language can be worth \$1000 to a young officer. Someone who enters with native-speaker proficiency (5/5) in a hard language can get up to \$2500. That is about the limit of the department's incentive system.

After four years, foreign service officers are required to rate 3/3 in a world language or 2/2 in a difficult language in order to keep their jobs. This means that every officer has to pass a language test at one point in his career, but it means little else. There is no requirement for re-testing, and no benefits, either, for retaining proficiency. In fact, the system contains outright disincentives against learning new, especially hard, languages. An officer who passes a French exam once and goes on to work in posts where no language at all is required will have a strong competitive advantage over another who spends two years learning, say, Arabic or Chinese. School-time is not as good as post-time in the State Department's promotion-rating system.

Once trained, an Arabic or Chinese speaker has some choice posts available. But that is not the case with officers who learn one-country languages such as Sinhalese or Amharic. Such proficiency gives one opportunity only to serve tours in Sri Lanka and Ethiopia, to which foreign services officers and their families are likely to say no thanks. The Soviet Union, which doesn't worry about what families think, sends its diplomats back to the same country again and again, assuring itself a cadre of seasoned experts. The United States not only does not encourage such specialization, but a program instituted during the Kissinger era actually discourages it. Kissinger supposedly visited Mexico City once and was appalled that US diplomats there didn't understand SALT. So he instituted the Global Orientation Program (acronymed GLOP), requiring that foreign service officers spend a certain amount of time outside their specialty area. In practical terms, this means that a Korean language specialist may end up, say, in South Africa, where his language proficiency will lapse and the money spent to train him will be wasted.

What to do about all this? Clearly, pay and other incentives should be created to encourage officers to learn and stay proficient in languages. Tours of duty probably should be extended from two years in a post to three. New ways have to be found to employ spouses of foreign service officers abroad; increasingly, they are refusing to give up jobs and pleasant surroundings in Washington to traipse the earth. On the other hand, creating "little Americas" in underdeveloped countries, with swimming pools, bars and fancy commissaries, isolates American diplomats and creates distance between them and local people. The Carter administration, with its various review boards and commissions, has to figure out how to find, train and encourage more dedicated internationalists than the United States now

has. It is the only way for the US to be sensitive to what is happening in other countries. It is the only way to avoid Ugly Americanism. The country in *The Ugly American* was fictional, but American bumbling was a reality in Vietnam. And more recently, in Iran.

Morton Kondracke

The decline of the West,
as seen from Russia.

Spengler in Moscow

Moscow

Monday morning the news reached the Soviet public: Chinese troops had invaded Vietnam. Tension had been high since Deng Xiaoping traveled through America denouncing Soviet "hegemonism," and now Russia's hatred of its Asian enemy rose to the surface. At Moscow State University that afternoon, Communist Youth leaders planned a demonstration in front of the nearby Chinese Embassy; that evening Moscow students assembled before the embassy in Friendship Park, chanting "Get out of Vietnam" to the skeleton staff of Chinese officials. On the radio, factory spokesmen and Vietnamese students living in Russia denounced the Chinese aggressors. At the political information billboards located in every school, library and office building, clippings from *Pravda* and *Izvestia* were posted to present the official line: the Soviet government regards the Chinese offensive as a heinous act of aggression, and warns the Chinese to withdraw from Vietnam "before it is too late."

The anti-Chinese harangues continued for the first week of the Sino-Vietnamese war. The government did little talking on its own, preferring to let private individuals or "public organizations" (such as the mysteriously created "Soviet Committee to Defend Peace") issue the statements of condemnation. The talk was tough, but it offered no concrete suggestions of how Moscow would help Vietnam. Instead, the Soviet press continually reminded the public that the Vietnamese people could defeat the Chinese on their own, as they had frustrated French and American imperialists in the past.

By the second week the chief enemy in the eyes of the Soviet press became the United States. President Carter's speech in Georgia declaring America's neutrality in the conflict provoked the Soviet claim that the United States had known of China's intentions beforehand, and had given Deng the go-ahead during

his visit to America. The Soviet public has never been informed that Vietnamese troops were responsible for the fall of Pol Pot in Cambodia (the whole affair has been depicted as an indigenous uprising by the "United Front for the Liberation of Kampuchea"). So it is easy for the government to convince people that the United States and China have entered into a conspiracy against Vietnam and, ultimately, the Soviet Union.

The idea of a Sino-American conspiracy against the Soviet Union has frightened Russians for several years. The events of the last year have seemed to confirm that nightmare. First came the Chinese treaty with Japan. Then Deng toured Europe and Britain began discussing the sale of Harrier fighters to China. Then Carter announced Washington's recognition of Peking, and finally Deng came to America. After the announcement of Sino-American normalization, *Pravda* suggested that Washington had decided to keep American troops from South Korea in order to deploy them in a joint Sino-American attack on Vladivostok.

If it comes to war, most Russians seem to believe, America does not stand a chance against the USSR without an alliance with China.

Many Americans were surprised by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's pronouncements on Western decline at Harvard last June. But Americans living in Moscow have been hearing the same message from Russians for the last year: the West is enjoying its last moments of decadence before its collapse, the American empire is receding and the Soviet empire will soon spread to all corners of the globe.

This widely held view of ordinary Russians is not just the result of state propaganda to the effect that capitalism will collapse as a result of its growing contradictions. In fact Marxist thinking has little to do with these predictions of American decline. Quite the contrary, these views are held by Russians who are aware of the cynical workings of their political system. When Khrushchev declared "We will bury you," what he had in mind was Marx's historical concept of youthful socialism outliving obsolescent capitalism. When ordinary Russians today warn that the Politburo will bury us, what they mean is that the Soviet military power will crush the now flabby American military. America's defeat in Vietnam shocked the Soviet public, and the subsequent victories for the Kremlin in Africa and Asia have reinforced the Russians' image of the impending destruction of the West.

This opinion has been expressed to me by average, undistinguished Russians whose thoughts carry little weight in America. But recently I heard the same idea uttered by a man whose views are respected in the West. Roy Medvedev is well known in the United States as a Soviet historian and intellectual. He is a Marxist dissident inside the Soviet Union who criticizes Stalinist Russia from a leftist perspective. Although he agrees with Solzhenitsyn in his condemnations of Stalin's terror, Medvedev represents the other current

April 26, 1979
p. 60, lines 23-24

U.S. Embassy Personnel
in Kabul
February 14, 1979

AMSTUTZ, J. Bruce	Deputy Chief of Mission
GRAHAM, Esther R.	Secretary
FINKELSTEIN, Phyllis Ann	Secretary
FLATIN, Bruce A.	Political Officer
TURCO, Frederick A.	Political Officer
TAYLOR, James Edward	Political Officer
MCNAULL, Michael E.	Narcotics Control Officer
MARIK, Warren J.	Political Officer
ALBISON, Adele M.	Secretary
SIGMAN, Rose Ann	Secretary
FRERES, Jay P.	Economic/Commercial Officer
LITT, David C.	Economic/Commercial Officer
LONG, Arnold C.	Economic/Commercial Officer
SIMPSON, Susanne	Secretary
MALINOWSKI, Michael E.	Consular Officer
ADAMS, Martin Phillip	Cons ar Officer
WOERZ, Bernard J.	Administrative Officer
KOSHELEFF, Mary J	Personnel Specialist
CAPR, Carolyn I.	Administrative Specialist

BILLICK, Michael	General Services Officer
MILES, Joseph C.	GSO Building Management
HERITAGE, George Franklin	GSO Procurement and Supply
ARONHIME, Joseph F.	Budget and Management Officer
ALEXANDER, Joseph N.	Communications & Records Off.
TURNER, Janice M.	Communications & Records Off.
JUNTUNEN, Dorian J.	Support Communications Off.
LEAPER, Ronald C.	Telecommunications Officer
WILSON, Edward	Telecommunications Support
BOLES, Charles K.	Security Officer
FLYNN, Kay M.	Secretary
ROTZ, Lloyd S.	Medical Officer
RIGAMER, Elmore F.	Medical Officer
CRAMER, Annene J.	Nurse
YAMAMOTO, Marjorie T.	Nurse
CROSS, Kumiko I.	Nurse
VIK, Se Dell G.	Medical Technician
STRONG, Louise M.	Secretary
LOSKOT, William F.	Rotational Officer

Heads of Other Agencies

GRADER, Charles R.	Director, AID
ROCKWOOD, Stacy F.	Director, Peace Corps
EDGAR, James S.V., Col.	Defense and Army Attache
WANKEL, Harold	Special Agent in Charge, DEA
LYDON, Roger M.	Public Affairs Officer

Insert

Attached is a listing of all significant international terrorist incidents from 1970 through March 31, 1979. All initially successful kidnappings or killings of diplomatic personnel, both U.S. and foreign, during this period have been indicated by asterisk. An addendum of such incidents from March 31 to the present is also attached. The nine-year totals, by country, of such incidents are as follows:

United States	20	Jordan	1
West Germany	5	Egypt	1
Turkey	5	Italy	1
Israel	3	Belgium	1
Yugoslavia	3	Japan	1
Sweden	2	Venezuela	1
Great Britain	2	Costa Rica	1
Switzerland	2	Brazil	1
France	2	Paraguay	1
Nicaragua	2	Bolivia	1
Uruguay	2	Chile	1
Saudi Arabia	2	Mexico	1

It should be noted that these figures do not include the large number of bombings and armed assaults against diplomatic installations or the many instances of unsuccessful kidnapping attempts or the wounding of diplomatic personnel.

Attachments:
As stated

ADDENDUM

- * 22 March 1979 The Hague, Netherlands British Ambassador to the Netherlands
Assassinated
On 22 March the British Ambassador was shot and killed outside his home in The Hague by unknown gunmen. The Ambassador was leaving his home for the Embassy when the attack occurred. A butler, a Dutch citizen, was also shot and died later of his wounds. Local police have no clues to the identity of the attackers but speculation is that the IRA is involved.
- * 4, 11 May 1979 San Salvador, El Salvador French, Venezuelan and Costa Rican
Embassies Seized by the BPR
Members of the Popular Revolutionary Bloc (BPR), a peasant-student-urban slum dweller coalition, occupied the French, Venezuelan and Costa Rican Embassies and held a number of hostages, including the Ambassadors of all three countries. Ultimately, all hostages either escaped or were freed in exchange for the release of several BPR members being held by the government and asylum in Costa Rica and Panama for the BPR occupiers.
- * 30 May 1979 San Salvador, El Salvador Swiss Charge d'Affaires to El Salvador
Assassinated
The Swiss Charge d'Affaires, Hugo Wey, was assassinated while driving to work. The assailants rammed his car from behind with their vehicle and forced him off the street where they then shot him. No group has yet taken credit for the attack.